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MEMORANDUM FOR RECORD

Date: 17 - 18 May 1966

SUBJECT: Field Trip -- Cadre Liaison Visit to An Giang Province

PARTICIPANTS: John Paul Vann, Cadre Project Manager, USAID ADFO
Dan Ellsberg, Embassy, SLO
Jack Penland, Assistant Cadre Project Manager, USAID ADFO

COPIES TO: All participants named above.
EXSEC

1. At the request of Bert Fraleigh, DAD/FO, USAID, the subject visit was made for the purpose of determining the special needs of this area for cadre and the possibility of slanting the training at Vung Tau to help meet these needs.
2. Personnel contacted at An Giang with whom cadre discussions were held included:
 - Mr. Fraleigh, USAID, DAD/FO
 - Mr. Melhert, USAID Provincial Representative
 - Mr. Dodds, Embassy OSA
 - Lt. Col. Gregg and staff, MACV
 - Capt. Graves, Thot Not Subsector Advisor
 - Lt. Col. Phan, Province Chief
 - Deputy District Chief, Thot Not District
3. Briefings on the province situation were given by Messrs. Fraleigh and Dodds. Mr. Dodds also showed us the new living facilities for the Embassy personnel in An Giang and the new office for the Cadre Control Organization (in the lower floor of the Embassy living quarters). Approximately one hour was spend visiting with the Province Chief in company with Messrs. Fraleigh, Melhert, and Mr. Dodds. Discussion with the Province Chief emphasized the importance of his role in making the cadre program work and the U.S. willingness to aid and assist him in the program.
4. There are 104 Revolutionary Development Cadre personnel in the province including 64 who had received either PAT or APA training. The remainder are NLH, GAMO or Rural Political cadre who are awaiting training at Vung Tau. In training at Vung Tau are four cadre groups totaling 218 men (18 dropped out of the program from the original number of 236).

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Memorandum for Record

-2-

4. A field trip to observe the cadre at work was made on 18 May. At Mr. Dodds' suggestion, the trip was made to Thot Not District. Mr. Dodds could not go along since he had a previously scheduled visit to make to Saigon. He stated that the cadre unit he was sending us to observe had been visited by himself several times but that he had not found them working during these visits. In company with Mr. Fraleigh and an interpreter, we visited Thot Not District Headquarters and effected liaison with the Subsector Advisor and the Deputy District Chief. From there, accompanied by the Deputy District Chief (and joined later by the Subsector Advisor, Capt. Graves) we proceeded to the area the cadre were scheduled to be working. After looking for the cadre at several locations, we met them on the Rach Gia highway at 1130, approximately one kilometer from where they reported they were working. In the subsequent discussion with the Vung Tau trained PAT platoon leader, it was determined that:
 - a. Seven of the assigned 28 members were present for duty.
 - b. Eight were on vacation.
 - c. Six were on sick leave.
 - d. Seven were taking typewriter examinations in Thot Not District town.
 - e. The average "present for duty" strength of the 28-member platoon was reported by the platoon leader to be 15.
 - f. The cadre commuted daily from Thot Not District town to their place of work. They commuted by bus, at a round trip cost of 20 piastres. (Their daily travel allowance was reported by Mr. Dodds to be 60 piastres. It was not clear whether all the Thot Not cadre received this travel allowance, or just those who actually traveled to the place of work.)
 - g. The platoon leader reported that he and his six men had spend the morning laying out housing sites for refugees. He resisted the suggestion that two members of the visiting team have lunch with him at the refugee location and observe the work, and this suggestion was not pushed when it became obvious that he was reluctant to comply.
 - h. The Deputy District Chief and the Subsector Advisor both stated that the cadre platoon leader was resistant to control or direction by District, maintaining he worked directly for the Province.

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Memorandum for Record

-3-

5. In addition to the observation of the cadre, the field trip included visits to USAID supported activities and projects. A particularly favorable impression was made on the visitors by the work of the Chinese Agricultural Team assigned to An Giang. The initiation of crop diversification (from single annual floating rice crop) appears to be the most significant and primarily economic development project underway.
6. A two hour session was held with Lt. Col. Gregg, MACV Sector Advisor, and his staff. This period was devoted to an orientation on the training of Revolutionary Development Cadre and the concepts of their development. The MACV personnel displayed keen interest in the program and confirmed that there was an extensive need for cadre, particularly the specialist teams.
7. Discussions with Fraleigh, Dodds, Gregg and Melhert confirmed the belief that the basic course at Vung Tau would have to be supplemented by an in-province training program to orient the cadre on the particular needs and opportunities in An Giang. Mr. Dodds is working on a plan to build a central training and retraining facility in the province.
8. The limited time precluded observation of the remainder of the cadre or the province, and obviously the cadre activities observed may not be typical of the province. Additionally, from my conversations, I believe all U.S. representatives in the province to be aware of the past deficiencies in cadre performance and the necessity for improved GVN supervision and direction of the four trained cadre groups scheduled for return from Vung Tau this month. For whatever value they may be, the following are my impressions as to areas or activities that need additional review or action by U.S. members of the provincial team in An Giang.
 - a. Operational control of the cadre: Those cadre working in a District should normally be under the operational control of the District Chief. This should be quite clearly spelled out so that confusion does not exist as to who is responsible for direction and supervision.
 - b. Transportation allowances: Care must be exercised to not encourage daily return to a district town. If cadre personnel cannot be made to remain overnight in the very secure hamlets in An Giang, then little hope exists that they will elsewhere. Additionally, I believe the amount authorized should not exceed the actual costs of the travel.
 - c. Location of Cadre Control Office: Although Mr. Dodds has generously sacrificed his own comfort to move the cadre office out of totally inadequate quarters, I see a possible propaganda advantage to the VC and an adverse public reaction to having the Revolutionary

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Memorandum for Record

-4-

Development Cadre headquartered in a building that is luxurious and ostentatious by comparison with most public offices. Additionally, there is the risk that the presence of the two Embassy representatives in the upstairs portion of the cadre office might be interpreted by the general populace and some GVN personnel as implying direct U.S. control. Since the U.S. personnel have not yet moved in, consideration could be given to the relocation of either these personnel ^{or} of the cadre office.

- d. Future cadre requirements: Given the excellent security situation that exists in the province, and the presence of over 7,000 RF/PF troops, it appears that the need for PAT's is quite limited. My personal opinion is that future quota requests should emphasize Census/Grievance and New Life Development specialists cadres, the number being dependent on the yet to be demonstrated ability of GVN officials to properly supervise their activities and provide follow-up technical assistance to the hamlets.

Additional Distribution:

Mr. Maynard, ADFO, USAID
Mr. Fraleigh, DADFO, USAID
Mr. Ellis, Embassy OSA
Mr. Dodds, Embassy OSA An Giang
Mr. Melhert, USAID Provincial Representative An Giang
Lt. Col. Gregg, MACV Sector Advisor An Giang

JPV
JPVann:sl:ADFO
21 May 1966

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